



## **Office of the Mayor**

### **News Release**

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

Contact: *Mikki Dobski, Director of Communications & Special Projects, 235-5855 or 876-1564*

*Mark Dollinger, Weed & Seed Coordinator, 235-7619 or 876-5699*

### **Weed & Seed Premieres Safe Haven Program Video**

The South Bend Weed & Seed Alliance, Inc. (SBWSA), Prevention and Treatment (PIT) Committee is pleased to present their second in a series of short documentaries featuring youth who participate in the Weed & Seed Safe Haven programs. The title of the video is "The Way It Is". The video serves as an educational tool for the youth and provides them an opportunity to learn the intricacies of film and video production, along with continuing the strategy of weeding out the negatives and seeding in the positives.

On Saturday, March 10, 2007, at 10 A.M., in the auditorium of the South Bend Police Department, members of the Weed & Seed Alliance, along with representatives of the Common Council, and the St. Joseph County Prosecutor's office, will preview this video, which the majority of was written and filmed by youth in the Weed & Seed area. "This behind the scenes look from the perspectives of our youth, will bring about an awareness of their concerns and what we as a City can do to help improve and expand on the good things happening in their neighborhoods," commented Mayor Stephen Luecke.

The film will also highlight the problems that exist in the area, and what has been done to correct them. Drawn from the "mouths of babes", these short film series will be used by the Weed & Seed Alliance Board of Directors, in evaluating the progress of the

Safe Havens and the overall strategy. The video will be distributed to neighborhood organizations and Safe Havens throughout the Weed & Seed service area which encompasses West Side, Oliver Gateway and LaSalle Park neighborhoods.

“As we progress through the strategy, it is important to continually evaluate where we are in the process and the success we have seen. We recognize the growth and development of the strategy and also realize that there is more work to accomplish. We commend the youth on the great job they have done capturing and sharing their thoughts on the video,” stated Mark Dollinger, Coordinator.

Funding for the video was provided through the Weed & Seed 2006 fourth year federal grant funds received from the United States Department of Justice. Another video in the series is scheduled to be produced in the fall of 2007. The first video, “The Choice is Yours”, debuted in November 2004.

The Weed & Seed program is a federally sponsored community-based strategy whose purpose is to “weed out” negative and “seed in” positive influences in our neighborhoods. The South Bend strategy is a collaboration of the City, the St. Joseph County Prosecutor’s Office, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Weed & Seed Alliance, and the South Bend Police Department.